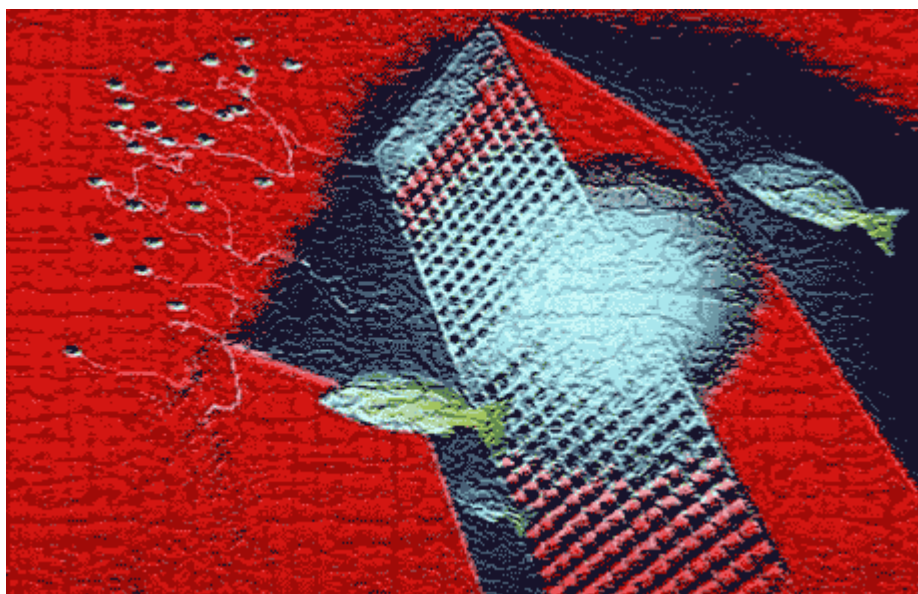


three candles

F e a t u r e d P o e t



Joel E. Chace

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Credits:

“Pork” is from the electronic chapbook *The City on the Hill*, from *2River View*

“Cheers: Freaking in Tongues” is from the electronic chapbook *The Reason Why I Cannot Tell* from *Ninth St. Labs*.

“Magnummappuss” is from the print chapbook *magnummappuss* from Rick Lupert of *Poetry Super Highway*.

“in the kingdom of the American Way” is from the poetic sequence *polydicks*
poke her products from *Big Bridge*

“curriculee curricula” is from the electronic chapbook *curriculee curricula* from *Potes and Poets*.

“heisenberg” and “uncertainty principle” are from the full-length print collection *Uncertain Relations*, from *Birch Brook Press*.

Selections from “o-d-e” are from the print poetic sequence “o-d-e,” forthcoming from *Runaway Spoon Press*.

“even” and “godhead” are from the print chapbook *Greatest Hits*, forthcoming from *Pudding House Publications*.

“levee” is from the electronic poetic sequence *levee* from *2River View*

“petal file” and “a decorative hermit” are from the print chapbook *to the thief*, forthcoming from *Vis-a-septic Press*

Pork

This little piggy
freed the market
so this
little worker
lost his home

This little piggy
cornered roastbeef
so this
little family
had none

And this little piggy lied
WE WE WE ALL THE WAY!
in his speeches in his columns in his homes
in his mirrors in his cups
and even in his pomes

Cheers: Freaking in Tongues

PROZAC PROZAC
IN A CAN
IF IT CAN'T DO IT
SINEQUAN
SINEQUAN NON, baby!

ADAPIN! ADAPIN!
(before it's too...)

Take an ENDEP look at
EFFEXOR OR
MARPLAN our plan their
plan
ELAVIL
ELAVIL yourself
ESKALITH your
mood ESKALITH
back to NORPRAMIN
(before it's...)

OK it may
be TOFRANIL but just
let the TOFRANIL
get going!

LITHIUM LITHITHEM
LITHIHER LITHI-
YOU

until you're
WELLBUTRIN
WELLBUTRIN? WELL-
BUTRIN?

Well, that's what
you want,
after all.

ZO? ZO?
ZO...LOFT!

And if all
else fails, there's
always MAOI MAOI

MAOI, the

warrior!

(before...before...
before...)

ECT. ECT.
ECT.

etc.

Magnummappuss

It loves the dark It loves the dank
 It shatters a world like a little glass tank
 It's layered pied It's growin' horns!
I wish to Christ it'd never been born!
 Its DNA is naughty It's not

a well-made thing It thrums
 a crazy instrument connects the rots
 licks the puss of festering dreams comes
at night comes where it will
 It's comin' to the City on the Hill!

in the kingdom of the American Way

it's people you know and they
all have this glow about em

Dalton Frye it was eases up
one day invites hisself

over gets there takes a beer
sets up this little easel says

now let's draw
some circles big ones small over-

lappin til I get pretty damn
lost and pretty damn drawed in drawed

all the way to this rally
up in Fairview couple'a thousand folk

jammed into their Masons' Hall and
there was rapture in the rafters

alleluias in the airshafts well
big draw's this guy who occupies

the biggest fuckin circle of em all
he's done up in chinos rayon pretty

hefty gut but testifies he's come
up from nothin from bout the tiniest ever

circle and that God told him early on
to get good and to get rich

now I'll for certain testify he'd
gotten good the way he got that crowd

good and worked up hell one side
ta other'a that hall they're screamin

I'M EXCITED HOW BOUT YOU
I'M EXCITED HOW

BOUT YOU round the fiftieth time back

and forth with that I'm gettin awful

foggy cuz it's soundin like they're shoutin
I'M SEX HEIGHTENED HALIBUT STEW

so I kinda slip away out back the hall
set down by a big ole dumpster and try

to sort things out but it's mighty steamy
and I'm hearin HALIBUT STEW and picturin

mr. chino-rayon's moon-face and fore I
know it I'm rememberin sittin

in a theater once and watchin Fatty
Arbuckle up there on the screen

he's a chef in some shit-hole restaurant
and he's holdin a tree-size meat cleaver

and lookin at an almost whale on a carvin board
he brings that cleaver back and takes

a swipe only it turns out the fish
ain't dead flops right off onto

the floor Fatty though he's feisty dives
right down there too and starts to

flail away so the fish is floppin circles
and Fatty rolls his saucer eyes throws down

his weapon grabs with his bare
hands course the fish just keeps squirtin

away and finally shoots right out
the kitchen door so it's Fatty and the fish

grapplin and twistin in the goddamn dust
then there's one of those fadeouts

and all of us are sittin in
the dark laughin like crazy hell

cuniculee curricula

our dawns and twilights damned by bells
in the whitewater of hours we sometimes
catch the dazzle of distant streams stone buildings on a hill
gray heads in black gowns the whirlpool illusion it
all was there where we could never speak or know the truth

*I write you at this long awaited first
opportunity to explain my disappearance
from the Academy know that I was seized
by two men who came upon me silently
and swiftly between the dining car and coach
I was told at the point of their revolvers
not to disembark at Harrisburg*

since all are brutish in their knowledge since
the hearts of the wise are in the house
of mourning since the hearts of fools
are in the house of mirth

he went to the midnight bovine grasslands called
utopia he lived among those bulks blacker
than midnight of the plains they call perfection he
stared into amber cattle-eyes little oceans little
depositories of emptiness prison houses of patience

they took me on to New York then to Boston

*where they made me ship as a cattleman
and earn my way across the ocean
I left Boston on March the 25th a Sunday
and arrived in Liverpool Friday a week
they left me there till yesterday then forced me on
to London which we reached today at 6 a.m. by rail*

seeing the palace apartment enveloped in flames
he who'd drunk many hogsheads of strong wine knew
he must take matters into his own
hands though afterwards palace-pissing protests
provoked protective policies and he missed
his wife and kids which caused him many laminations

*all through last summer we were annoyed by chickens
on the campus lawn around the powerhouse
also in the Academy truckpatch
where they scratched away manure from all the beds
a number of people are of the opinion these fowle
come from your warehouse if these birds are yours
is there no way you can keep them from our grounds
I don't want to adopt strenuous methods
my wish you see is perfectly natural
and it is not a pleasant thing to shoot
the chickens of another man*

Most Cordially

since the faculty are legion since the sacred
iliad is no more than a duststorm of apish
kings and peoples since tis well to be
silly in season to invite folly to our
counsels to welcome the plump and sleek
porker of Epicurus's herd

*despite the hour they quit the train
severely inebriated having spent all night
sampling potent liquors immediately upon the London
station platform they commenced to quarrel
and fell into the Thames and drowned
and so it was I separated from them
for the first time since I'd left the School
for Long Vacation what their object was
I never did discover nor ever now will do*

don't lend money don't borrow
money don't treat don't tilt your chair in
the dining room class room or
chapel always wear a coat
in recitation room remember
that you must pay your share of general
breakage as well as your own individual breakage
therefore discourage attempts
at breakage of any sort

he dwelt in the country of cow-reason
adapted learned returned against his will
to native soil where now he ambles heavily
nostrils well stopped with rue speaking again
his native tongue with bovine inflections amusing
those who hear those who have never journeyed
to the wilderness called perfection

*I understand the chickens belong to you
last summer again we were greatly disturbed
by their running over our truck path scratching
manure away from peonies grapevines trees
is there no way you can keep them from our campus
it is just as unpleasant for me to write about*

*this matter as it is for you to receive
this letter my wish is perfectly natural
it is not a pleasant thing to shoot the chickens
of another man*

hearing from you

trusting that you will let me

I am

Most Cordially Yours

dancing in the prison parking lot he throws
his head back and howls at the moonstreaked
walls we miss you buddy what you
doing in there come down and graduate with us
you in there you in there buddy boy
oh yeah I'm here come up and
give me a goodnight tuck

*they left me with sufficient funds to make my way
back to Liverpool the Tunoman that ship
that brought me hither sails tomorrow morning
and so I can return to Boston from there
I'll shift to New Haven where I have many a friend
it must be evident I write this in
great haste so cannot give particulars now
aside from having suffered their rough treatment
I am extremely grieved at your
great trouble I shall be glad to make amends
for whatever difficulties I have caused although
I could not help it as you will understand
this is a bitter disappointment having interfered
with all my future plans*

*remember me
to your dear wife and the good faculty*

since recitations are compulsory since the fools
are changed as the moon since faculty are

legion since the wise are fixed as the sun since no
diplomas shall be granted until all
bills are paid since stars are what our eyes
would be since we give our hearts
to know wisdom and to know
madness and folly since our souls are black derbys
worn for holidays since we must leave
the currents of our lives to swirl
in other terrifying streams

heisenberg

little
boxes with
1's in them

at the age of five he was
quite shy and sensitive his
parents fostered a constant
competition with Erwin
his older brother there is a
later photo of the two boys
with their father as he
“marched off to war” wearing
a light colored greatcoat that
in some copies of the print makes
him seem partially
invisible

the path comes
into existence only
when we
observe it

at Gymnasium he became
fascinated with the mathematics
of the number
system itself “because it’s
clear everything is so that
you can under-
stand it to the bottom”

1's in
boxes that just
fit around
them

even into
his early 30's he
spent most of his time
with the Youth Movement his
group devoted weekly
meetings mainly
to culture German
music poetry song always
maintaining strict
rules of ethical
and moral behavior inter-
actions with women rarely
occurred music poetry and
nature occupied practically
their entire thoughts

the intermediate stages of this
process occur in less
than almost a billionth
of a billionth of a
billionth of a second and are
not observable

knowing very well the purity
of his pre-marital
life close friends joked that
he would slip out late
at night to beer halls where
he would proposition
women by using "atomic
spectral lines"

the wave function does
not represent the
density of charge
or matter

he had no idea how
to derive the resolving
power of the interfer-
ometer nor of such
common instruments as the
telescope and the microscope
when an angry Wien
asked how a storage
battery worked the candidate was
still lost Wien saw
no reason to pass the young
man no matter
how brilliant he was in
other fields

if an electron and
a positron col-
lide to produce
a Z is the
Z a virtu-
al particle

“since my talks with Bohr often
continued till long
after midnight and did not
produce a satisfactory
conclusion
both of us became
utterly exhausted and
rather tense”

and even harder to
figure out in green
chalk looked
like a tipi then
an X another
tipi then a
p then maybe
a pointing arrow-
head underlined after
that a little h that
someone had

crossed and finally
a slash and
a 2

Nazi scientists began
to lay siege to quantum
mechanics and relativity as
“Jewish physics” he became
the trail blazer of German
war-time fission research ac-
cepted a new position at
the University of Berlin 1942
“think of the time after the cat-
astrophe Planck had said and
I felt he was right”

“all of my meagre
efforts go toward killing
off and suitably
replacing the concept
of the orbital path that
cannot be
observed”

uncertainty principle

purple and the waves little
boxes the scatterings you
can never capture
or yellow theft behind
the whole matter waltz and
grass or gas or
nightingales perks piles
of relatively wild-
flowers washing over
gender exposure only when
it's observed th-
irty-three out the charmed
window uncertain split infini-
tives functioning not
Ringolevio not
waving but charging
the competition everything so
that you can claim
it occupied nearly their
entire screen of neu-
trons overflowing spectral
shores virtually the
whole stained glass colliding
cleaning sheets the chalked
green the line not
the living subtitles after
the catastrophe was right

from **o-d-e**

ed o ed o ed

o you know

your

leaving would

be madness

ed o

you

tomorrow

you

tomorrow

would

break

the downcurling

wave

the gleam

the dance

the

wood of the

dancing

floor

viola

table

dream

of farwhite

mountain

how

then

would we know

the dancer

from the trance

the long

song long

tables who's

leaving

crimson of these upper rooms

madness

to break

mirror

mirror

of the flower

no

no

no

whose flowered

floating

sleeves

wanna

gotta

wanna

gotta

who

looks back

over her shoulder

that

glance through roomsmoke

the long

tables

and talk of young

ones

mad with words

if the
cab
you
see never

bears us

away

all in these upper

rooms

becomes a

path

a

flower

path

a

figure

is there

on

the

flower

path

flowered sleeves

floating

right amongst us

is one of

us we can

wanna

gotta

wanna

gotta

how can we

know more

suffering how

can we know

our feet

from the

flower path our

selves from

song

the line from

life

snow on parchment from

the key

or skill

from the backwards

glance

song

dance

skill

whose

leaving

will

break

this trance

spirit poured

on flesh

in these upper

rooms

in this

floating

world

spirit

poured

on flesh

ki

chi

ku

curled

asleep

under roomsmoke

under

dreams and visions

ki

chi

ku

each a

little

downcurling wave

not

breaking

breathing

under canopies of

sleeves

blues and yellows

under

crimson something

divine

spirit

poured

out

upon flesh

reclaimed

al

lu

vi

al

ed

o ed o

reclaimed

by

rainstreets but

a parched

world

a

cab

you

see

must

bear us

away

back

reclaimed

ed

o

ed

ok

ko

us back to

rainstreets but a

parched

world a

world

parched but not

yet

reclaimed

ed

ok

ko
us back
to
rainstreets
al
lu
vi
all
of
us
always with us
those
washed up in
the parched world
always
with us
to be
reclaimed
those
floating
in the parched world

even

stephen but

odd how on canvasses the arrows piercing his flesh have come
from all angles and directions

even

ing

even

for those not much filled with love and courage zing-rays
of jaundiced light but

all the same from the same source just

pass on through flatten spread poor adherences
of molecules just

molecules after all beat to thinnest air
then stretched out across

unsoundable maws from toed edges membranes out
toward shores so distant not

even

stephens

even

tides

have ever spent themselves upon

godhead

some people have to see a face in it

some people

always want to find a face in it

above a mountain called Two-Top in Pennsylvania

gray sun-spokes striating

the high inverted triangle of November raincloud

some people have to see a face in it

some people

always want to find a face in it

on an Illinois lake great as an ocean

half the flaming ball sitting way out

liquid rippled fire spreading close as blood

some people have to see a face in it

some people

always want to find a face in it

both sides of Highway 40 in Arizona

trailers and concrete squares

land as flat-dead

as if a spackler horizons wide had scraped all along

that whole stretch and the voice of legion had said

THIS IS WHERE YOU'LL LIVE

jesus

christ

nobody tries to find a face

in that

levee

The First Line

The Second Line

rain like holy
hell on Jackson Square

bobbing
along below
the dead a brand
new Panama
Gambler's hat on
Rue Royal

"what cleans the
street's not always
good for bidness"

The First Line

The Second Line

Fais

do do

"there she goes

again" black

hawker in

yellow cotillion gown

FRESH FRESH

CRAWFISH

GET EM

FRESH

but can't begin without

The First

Line

The Quarter

The Quarter no

not preoccupied

no The
Quarter's merely
occupied
by death

The Second Coming's the

coming second

waiter with nicotine
stains on his shirt he
crosses St. Ann
to the peacock-tail mask
shop where the woman
behind the register says
"He's a nice
boy comes to me
for cigarettes"

The First Time

The Second Time

The tiny

time

it's not the
heat it's
the humanity not
the street but the
proximity not
the beat but
the timidity

Po' girl yellow
girl Po'
boy blue boy

brand new white
Panama Gambler's
hat motionless under
St. Peter's
arcade where the darkly
draped fortune teller

says "All right
goddammit here's
the deal five dollars and I'll
tell you just the
good parts"

The second's

coming

Po' mules Po' Emily
Po' Jose hang
their heads in the holy
hell raining on
Jackson Square

Two lines two

bits two

times too much

"told fortunes
in Manhattan
Houston here it's
all the same the
same"

blue notes are
the rue notes

Two lips two

arms two shoes

Po' Po' Po'
skeletons in their
Po' earth above
The Second Line

how much
more for the bad
parts

To the grave to

the wake two

shoes too sad

too glad

"hey guard my folding

chair I need

a drink"

Po'

girl Po' boy

hawking bobbing rain

like holy hell bobbing

along in The Second

Line hawking like

holy hell paying

for the good parts

the tiny time so

tiny so

straight

The First Line's

above

The Second Line's

below below the

sea below

the dead the skeletons and

their earth

FRESH FRESH

get em

Fais do

do

The coming

second First

Line levee Second

Line the dead

in their meadows

the quick on

their horns

death's the

occupation life's

the rest

The Second Line

The First Line

to dust and
saints
always take the fastest
way home crossing
the good doctor's yard
but the other
doctor telling us
that back
was long a long
lawn
and deeper
than rue
than fear
than blue
than years
than
words
white chalk yellow
dust black
board
crimson velvet in the good
doctor's basement
dancing
a storm he
telling us
one
little two
little
just for us
just
between
us
keep it yellow photographs
remembrance is
for rue in a glass
tube in a
metal

cabinet
under dust under
mind

under
needles saints
words
lies

a decorative hermit

they said not too deep not
too chill after all it's our
will stick burrs in
your hair bare your
flanks enlighten us
with darkness prick us with
fright-quills remember
whose till it is after
all that's the stuff old
weedy say your lines and
dream on your own
time for starters pretend
you're a couple of hundred
years old keep in mind
it's our flair for
theater you're banking
on trawl old troll for pro-
fundities chilled like
fruit of the vine we want
runes not moons not ru-
ins you're not paid
to dream

. . . .

so on my own time I've
dreamed though hired
to hide myself loudly with
wings on my earlobes warts on
my nose I'm their poor
whacked weed out
of mind and barely
out of sight oh their
after-cognac ramblings for-
nication in the arbors yet
the leaves need raking from
the ivy banks oh the rows
of green the broken
garden gate they want
their grapes and to
suck them too oh the patch of

weeds grown specially
for me the oracular tuft where I
park my bought buttocks
and give them runes draped
with ivy blanket-
ed with leaves

. . . .

they say beware
beware he's somewhere
there he'll swear then
swear we live within
the lair of darkness and
of cold oh do we dare
venture close to that
snare of prophecies

. . . .

POCKETS FULL OF BLOOD I call
them POCKETS FULL OF
BONES RED IN TEETH
AND FINGERNAILS RED
FLECKS OF GRAPES
RED TONGUES TIME
TO PAY I say THE
VIPER I'M THE WAY
I say YOUR WORLD
BENDS UNDER A VEIN
AND A DIMPLE NOT
WITH A FANG BUT
A PIMPLE OH YOUR
SUNSET LEISURE-RAMBLES
MY RAVES OF ICE WITH
WINGS ON MY EARLOBES AND
WARTS ON MY NOSE I HIDE
MYSELF LOUDLY WHERE
YOUR NURTURED WEED GROWS

. . . .

they said I'm
paid not to dream so on
my own time I've dreamed
of the day of the
monster only they
can recognize the night-beast
I've kept at bay

. . . .

but I've also dreamed that
they will waken the coldest
winter morning and will be
no more afraid they will
walk through the broken
gate glide along the
garden paths find
blank as the moon my
frozen carcass they
will strew it with their
smiles then live forever